

Annual Report 2006

Understanding our watershed

Conservation authorities are premised on the fact that water doesn't stop flowing at municipal boundaries. What happens upstream affects downstream water users and what happens on the surface affects groundwater.

To fully understand Kettle Creek's water quality and quantity one needs to better understand what is happening on the land. Consequently, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA) launched a comprehensive environmental monitoring program in 2006. In its first year, the program concentrated on collecting and analyzing samples from five groundwater wells, nine surface water sites and fifteen benthic sites throughout the watershed.

Surface water samples were processed for levels of nutrients, metals and major ions. Benthic monitoring investigated streambed bugs, which indicate stream health. All of this information will provide a baseline for future data comparison.

Preliminary monitoring results show that nutrients and suspended sediments are ongoing issues in the watershed. This is supported by conclusions in the Kettle Creek Water Quality Conditions and Trends Report (2006) which reviewed five years of data from the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network.

This work has been enhanced by KCCA's partnership with the Lake Erie Protection Region. The region is a partnership between KCCA, Cataraugus Conservation Authority and Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) for the purposes of source water protection. The benefits of this partnership have far surpassed the original objective. Working with GRCA, the lead agency in the partnership, KCCA has closed many knowledge gaps.

The Lake Erie partnership has been used to leverage funding for water-related studies in the Kettle Creek watershed. In 2006, close to \$200,000 was awarded to municipalities in the Kettle Creek watershed to perform water-related studies. Central Elgin received funding to create a new groundwater flow model for Belmont, and the Lake Huron and Elgin Area Primary Water Supply Systems received funding to complete a Great Lakes Intake Protection Zone Study.

Finally, the passing of the Clean Water Act in October 2006 set in motion a public process to develop a source water protection plan for the Kettle Creek watershed. The development of this plan will be overseen by a Source Protection Committee, which will be made up of representatives of municipalities, agricultural groups, businesses, First Nations, and conservation authorities.

All of the above information will be shared with the Source Protection Committee as they develop a source water protection plan in 2007. Working together, the community will gain a better understanding of the relationship between the land and their water sources.

Kettle Creek
Conservation Authority



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This work has been enhanced by KCCA's involvement in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region. The region is a partnership between KCCA, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, Long Point Region Conservation Authority and Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) for the purposes of source water protection. The benefits of this partnership have far surpassed the original objective. Working with GRCA, the lead agency in the partnership, KCCA has closed many knowledge gaps.

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Kettle Creek
Conservation Authority



Over 400 elementary students from St. Thomas schools got their hands dirty in the Spring, planting 8,000 trees at the Bucke Conservation Area. The event launched the Authority's 2006 planting season. A \$350,000 grant from Ontario Power Generation (OPG) meant KCCA could offer tree seedlings to landowners for twenty-five cents each. Over 100



landowners participated in the stewardship program planting 100,000 seedlings throughout the watershed.

KCCA also published the "Upper Kettle Creek Community Based Watershed

Strategy." This strategy is the second in a series of three watershed reports that strive to build a partnership of community stakeholders to identify local environmental concerns and develop action plans to address these issues. "The Dodd Creek Community Based Watershed Strategy" was completed in 2005 and a similar strategy is being created for the Lower Kettle Creek watershed in 2007. These strategies form the basis for stewardship efforts in the future.

The Watershed Report Card Education Program was also expanded to include the Upper Kettle Creek watershed through generous support by the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. This program allows local high school students to gain practical hands-on experience in surface water sampling, identifying benthic macroinvertebrates and assessing stream habitat.

Students also learn how to use maps to evaluate

forest conditions in the watershed. This program will continue in 2007.



Conservation Areas



KCCA's two campgrounds, Lake Whittaker Conservation Area and Dalewood Conservation Area continue to be campgrounds of choice, both generating enough money to cover costs and reinvest into the campground infrastructure. At Lake Whittaker, the lake's aerator, originally installed in 1989 to increase oxygen levels, was refurbished. A lake survey conducted in the summer confirms the aerator is working; fish of all age classes were identified.

KCCA received \$45,535 from Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program for the Upper Kettle Creek Watershed Rehabilitation. This project created a wetland and naturalized and reforested over 40 acres of land at Dan Patterson Conservation Area, Belmont Conservation Area, Lake Whittaker Conservation Area and Bucke Conservation Area. The wetland will help to boost wetland cover percentages in the watershed. Currently, the watershed is well below the 6% recommended for a subwatershed by Environment Canada.

However, progress is being made. In 2006, the endangered least bittern and marsh wren were found to be nesting in the Dalewood marsh. This discovery confirmed the area's status as a Provincially Significant Wetland.

With funding provided by the Provincial Government's Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Program, KCCA repaired the Payne's Mills stream flow station. Stone was placed upstream and downstream of the existing steel weir, which stabilized the structure and improved fish passage.

While four flood advisories and one safety bulletin were issued in 2006, there were no major flood events.

Flood Forecasting

Forestry & Stewardship

Planning & Regulations



In 2006, KCCA received approval for a new regulation to implement the provincewide "Generic Regulation 97/04." The new generic regulation replaces the previous "Fill, Construction and Alteration to Watercourses Regulation." However, the general purpose of the regulation remains the same - to ensure public safety, protect our natural heritage and

protect property damage due to natural hazards such as flooding and erosion. KCCA issued 53 permits for works in or near watercourses, valleys, wetlands or shorelines in 2006.

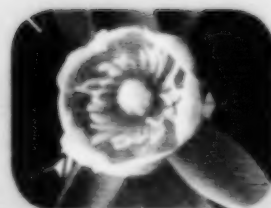
Staff continue to work collaboratively with municipal counterparts and developers to make the planning and regulations process better. KCCA hired an engineering consultant to identify the regulation limit and associated hazard lines for the entire watershed. This information will be made public in 2007 through CMap, KCCA's online mapping interface. Thanks to a cost sharing partnership, the Southwestern Ontario Orthophotography Project, up to date colour aerial photography for the entire watershed will also be added. For the first time, landowners will be able to visit KCCA's website to see whether or not their property falls within a regulated area.

A final achievement in 2006 was the establishment of the "Policies and Procedures for Environmental Impact Studies (EIS)." This policy, which outlines KCCA's requirements and submission processes, has been well received by the development community.

A number of upgrades were performed on KCCA's administration building. New windows were installed in the office, replacing the original windows which were installed in 1976.

Both Bryan Steele, KCCA's Conservation Areas Supervisor and Rob Lindsay, Forest and Soils Conservation Supervisor celebrated five years of service with the Authority.

Administration



2006

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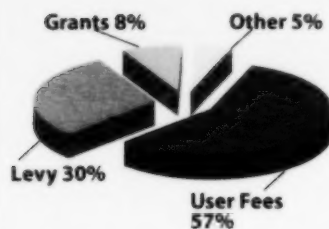
2006 Staff

Bryan D. Hall
General Manager/Secretary Treasurer

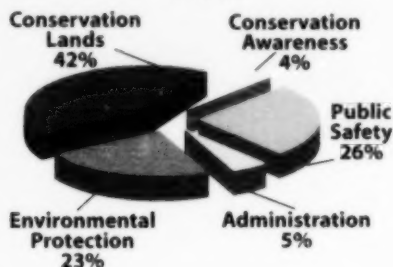
Nancy Booy
Naomi Delaney
Joe Gordon
Tim Lanthier
Rob Lindsay
Barry McKnight
Ashley Murray
Ryan Sestric
Bryan Steele
Dusty Underhill
Elizabeth VanHooren
Betsy Wilcox

2006 Financial Statements

Total Revenues
\$1,645,830



Total Expenditures
\$1,645,664



Source: Audited Financial Statements 2006



Kettle Creek Conservation Trust
Everything is connected

Trust starts with \$60,000

The Kettle Creek Conservation Trust received a \$60,000 donation from Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA) at its inaugural meeting on Wednesday November 22, 2006.

The Trust guarantees donors that their money will be held in the Kettle Creek watershed community in perpetuity. The Trust is a separate and distinct entity from the KCCA. The Trust can accommodate endowments and provides for a lasting legacy by ensuring the funds remain in the Kettle Creek watershed forever. Moreover, donors can donate money to the Trust with any terms they wish as long as the terms meet the objectives of the Trust which includes the advancement of wetland restoration, education with respect to the environment, the relief of pollution by planting trees and other charitable work that benefits the Kettle Creek watershed community as a whole.

KCCA's donation to the Trust was comprised of a \$50,000 donation from the estate of Stuart Parsons to be held for payment to KCCA for the purpose of fostering conservation stewardship of private lands within the Kettle Creek watershed; and \$10,000 from Don and Hazel Williams to be held for payment to KCCA for the purpose of fostering heritage conservation at the Dan Patterson Conservation Area.



Kettle Creek Conservation Trust Inaugural Members:

Back Row (left to right) Bryan D. Hall, Richard Haddow/Chair, Terry Carroll/Vice Chair, Jack Ferriman.
Front Row: Don Ferguson, Tom Marks, Gord Campbell.
Absent from photo: Greg Tarry, Chuck Raven and Perry Clutterbuck.

Our Donor List...

Thank you to the following for their financial donations to Kettle Creek Conservation Authority in 2006:

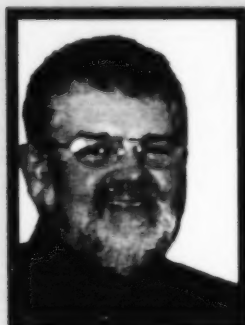
CAW Local 1520 • Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System • Elgin Presbyterial UCW • Elgin Stewardship Council • Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation • Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program • Eugene and Linda Smith • Kettle Valley Pioneers • Louis Brataneck • Michael Steele • Minerva Art Galleries • MNR's Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program • Northern Casket (1976) Limited • Ontario Power Generation • Presstran Industries • Richard Haddow • Robin Foster • Salvation Army Correctional & Justice Services • Sheila Fletcher • St. Thomas Field Naturalists • TD Friends of the Environment Foundation • Toronto Community Foundation

The 2006 Annual General Meeting was sponsored by:

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Don Howey

In Memoriam...

Don Howey, a beloved employee of KCCA passed away suddenly on August 9, 2006. It seems contradictory to describe a man that was well known as "Butch" and "Moose" as a big huggable teddy bear. But, that was the essence of Don - a warm, caring individual who donned the biggest smile on even the darkest of days. Each year Don helped the Authority plant, on average, 75,000 trees. He was active in the local hockey community and was a mentor for many co-op high school students. Don was a family man, who is missed dearly by his wife Carolyn and two sons Derek and Chad. After 30 years of dedicated service to the KCCA, Don will be missed.